rounds of negotiations have been held and progress has been made by both sides. The next round of negotiations is scheduled to be held in January 2010. We are committed for an early, balanced and successful conclusion of the negotiations.

Fate of Doha round WTO discussion

1391. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the fate of Doha round discussion of WTO; and

(b) whether USA and European Union have agreed to reduce their agriculture subsidy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Following the impasse in the Doha Round WTO talks at the mini-ministerial meeting held in July 2008, the general opinion among members has been that there should be early resumption of the talks. Similar views were expressed by Ministers, Heads of Government and Governments at various multi-lateral fora held during the past two years. India, thereupon took the initiative to host an informal ministerial meeting in September 2009 to re-energise Doha.

Multilateral discussions have since begun in the WTO on the basis of the draft modalities text proposed by the Chair of the Negotiating Group on Agriculture on December 6, 2008. As per the draft modalities text brought out by the Chair of the Negotiating Group on Agriculture on 6 December 2008, the US would take a 70% cut in their Overall Trade-distorting Domestic Support (OTDS) which would reduce their ceiling level of OTDS from the current US$ 48.2 billion to US$ 14.5 billion. The EC is to cut OTDS from €110.3 bn to € 22.6 bn. India as a member of the G-20 coalition is seeking reduction in subsidies in developed countries. Multilateral discussions are underway.

MEP of Basmati rice

1392. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has not so far notified the Minimum Export Price of Basmati which may result dent in our export of Basmati;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Empowered Group of Ministers has recommended lowering of Minimum Export Price (MEP) from US $1100 a tonne to US $800 per tonne; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for delay in notifying the MEP?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The Empowered Group of Minister (EGoM) in its meeting held on 17th August, 2009 decided to reduce the Minimum Export Price (MEP) on Basmati Rice from US$ 1100 per tonne to US $ 900 per tonne. On formal conveyance of the decision, a Notification lowering MEP on basmati rice was issued from the office of Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) on 07th September, 2009.

Incentives to exporters

†1393. DR. RAM PRAKASH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that export is being adversely affected due to rupee becoming steady against the dollar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has formulated any plan to provide incentive to the export companies to tackle the situation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The Rupee exchange rate being steady provides stability to Indian exports, and does not adversely affect the exporters.

(c) and (d) Government is closely monitoring the trend in exports growth and export potential, and is reviewing the progress on a continuous basis. Accordingly, need based appropriate measures are taken, keeping in view the financial implications.

Proposal for extending NH in Burdwan district of West Bengal

1394. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) when the proposal for extending the National Highway in Burdwan district of West Bengal had been taken up; and

(b) the initial estimated cost of the above project;

(c) whether it is a fact that the project is running far behind the schedule;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) the details of cost and time-overrun due to delay in the above project; and

(f) the action taken by Government against the officials and contractors for the above delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH): (a) The highway from Burdwan to Bolpur was declared as National Highway No. 2B during January 2006, which was further extended up to Mollarpur in November 2008.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.